Bismarck Fire Department 2013 Annual Report

LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

On behalf of the men and women of the Bismarck Fire Department, I am proud to report on the department's activities and efforts in 2013. It is an honor to work with great employees who are highly trained professionals. They are a special workforce, strong enough to face significant risk in response to emergencies, yet caring and kind as they make a positive difference in the community every day throughout all of their duties.

This report describes the services provided by the department, the volume of activity, the threat of fire in our community, and the department's effect on mitigating fire emergencies. It also reports on the preparation, readiness, prevention, and planning.

During 2013 there were a number of significant changes and planning efforts that will impact the future. A number of organizational processes were modified to improve operations and services to those we serve.

Sincerely,

Joel Boespflug

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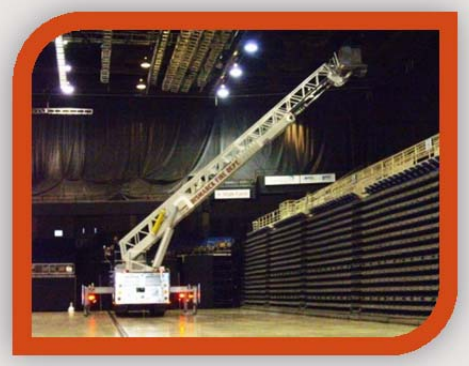
Fire Chief

Bismarck is first city in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota to reach a Class 2 Fire Protection Rating

To gauge effectiveness, the department continually measures to a number of standards including the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Commission for Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), and the Insurance Services Office (ISO). Bismarck rates well in accordance with these standards, and in particular with the ISO standard. In July of 2013, the ISO conducted a fire protection rating survey for Bismarck. The ISO grades communities on their fire protection on a scale of 1 to 10, a Class 1 rating is superior and a Class 10 does not meet standards.



According to ISO information, the City of Bismarck is the first city in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota to reach a fire protection rating of Class 2. According to ISO, nationwide only 1.7% of the communities have received a fire protection rating of Class 2 or better.

Since 1971, ISO has been a leading source of information about property/casualty insurance risk. The ISO conducts a survey of communities on a regular basis. The survey is used to rate communities on their fire department staffing, facilities and equipment, the city's water supply system and emergency communication system. The classification is used by many insurance companies to assist in establishing commercial and residential rates.

In the survey, fifty percent of the score is determined by the fire department capabilities. The fire department was required to demonstrate it was well equipped and that the equipment was well maintained and appropriately distributed throughout the city. Appropriate staffing with appropriate training was an important component in the survey along with community risk reduction programs. These included fire prevention activities, public education programs, and fire investigations. In addition to the fire department services, the city's water distribution system was evaluated for water storage, water flow, and maintenance of the system. This was 40% of the total score. The remaining 10% of the score was determined from the operations and reliability of the emergency communication system.

Strategic Planning

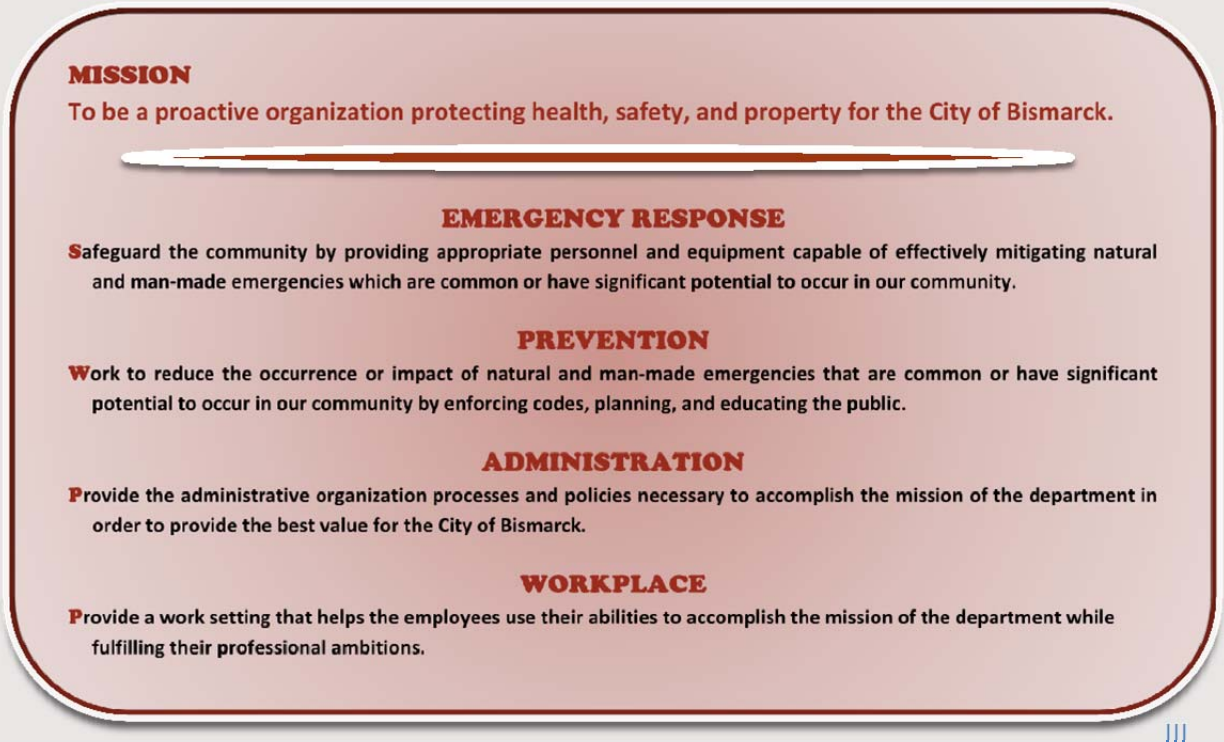
The Bismarck Fire Department is continually presented with both opportunities and challenges throughout all phases of emergencies, prevention, and preparedness. In 2013 the department implemented an extensive strategic planning process. The City of Bismarck's 2012 Strategic Plan serves as a pivot point for the Fire Department's Strategic Plan. Goals and objectives within the city plan that are specific to the department are incorporated throughout the fire department's plan.

The department's vision, a mental image of where our planning and implementation should take us, is defined within the plan. The mission statement, our purpose and reason for existence, is also defined.

The strategic plan revolves around the department's core values, the standards for behavior that all employees are to model in their personal work behaviors, decision making, contribution, and interpersonal interaction.

To achieve the mission of the department, four strategic areas are addressed and they include emergency response, prevention, administration and workplace. Within each of the strategic areas, objectives and action plans have been developed.

The design of the plan allows for it to be very fluid as objectives and action plans will be reviewed and added on a frequent basis to ensure that the strategies and mission are accomplished. Command staff and division heads provided progress reports every two weeks on the assigned tasks. The initial strategic plan consists of nearly two-hundred action items that are assigned to project leaders who are responsible to accomplish the assignments with and through others by the identified dates.



Structure of the Fire Department

The fire department operates from five fire stations that are strategically located throughout the city in order to provide timely emergency response. To best deliver services there are a number of divisions within the department. These include three battalions to staff each of the fire stations on a 24/7/365 basis; Support Services to deliver training, health and safety, fire prevention and fire investigations; Environmental Health to ensure food handling code compliance and other environmental services; and Emergency Management to maintain a city operations plan, emergency operations center, and hazard mitigation plan.

The following provides a more extensive listing of the services provided by the department:

Fire Suppression
- Structure Fires
- Vehicle Fires
- Wildland Urban Interface Fires

Emergency Medical Response
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Automobile Accident Extrication

Technical Rescue
- High Angle Rescue
- Confined Space Rescue
- Structural Collapse Response
- Trench Rescue
- Ice Water Rescue

Hazardous Materials Response
- Technician Level Response
- Offensive Hot Zone Entry
- Air Monitoring
- Containment
- Decontamination
- Regional Area Response

Miscellaneous Type Reponses
- Carbon Monoxide
- Smoke/Odor Investigation
- Service Call

Pre-Fire Planning
- Occupancy Action Plans
- Building Schematic
- Strategy, Tactics
- Pertinent Response Information

Equipment Readiness
- Fire Apparatus
- Breathing Apparatus
- Monitoring Devices
- Emergency Communications
- Tools and Appliances

Fire Prevention
- Fire Code Enforcement
- Risk Management
- Public Fire Education
- Fire Sprinkler Review
- Fire Plan Reviews

Hydrant Flow Testing
- Fire Flow Requirement Testing
- Water Modeling System

Maintenance
- Stations and Grounds
- Apparatus
- Equipment

Training Competencies and Certifications
- Fire Suppression
- EMT
- Hazardous Materials
- Auto Extrication
- Technical Rescue
- Physical Fitness

Environmental Health
- Food Service
- Tanning Facilities
- Lodging Facilities
- Vector Control
- Swimming Pools
- Tattoo/Body Art
- Tall Grass/Tall Weeds

Emergency Management
- Continuity of Government Operations/Business
- Disaster Mitigation
- Risk Assessment
- Emergency Operations Center Management
- Recovery Planning

A Few Highlights of 2013

- Three firefighters were added in February to improve staffing.
- In 2012, Mobile Data Browsers (MDBs) were placed into service on all of the front line apparatus. In 2013, continued improvements were made to the functionality of the MDBs and the benefits of these important tools are beginning to be realized.
- Live burn training was a priority again in 2013. All of the firefighters engaged in the training. The Mandan FD and Grand Forks FD deserve a special thanks for their assistance.
- A new fire engine was ordered and is expected to arrive in April of 2014. This will become the front-line engine at the Headquarters Fire Station.
- A plan was implemented to better organize and manage all technical teams. Captains under the supervision of battalion chiefs were assigned to establish ongoing training requirements and manage each technical team such as hazmat, structural collapse, and ice rescue to name a few.

- Emergency Management completed a Continuity of Operations Plan for the city, completed an after action improvement plan for the active shooter exercise at Shiloh School, and developed a resource management coordinating and planning tool for large scale incidents.
- Training continues to be a high priority as the average number of hours per firefighter exceeds 300 hours.
- Other training done during the year included collapse training in Texas, attendance at the International Association of Fire Chief's Hazmat Conference in Baltimore, MD, attendance at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, MD, rope training at Beulah mine, and trench collapse training in Bismarck.

2013 Emergency Response Information

In 2013, there were no fire related deaths in the City of Bismarck. This is the third year in a row that the city has had no fire fatalities. This brings the annual fatality rate for the last ten years to 0.2 deaths per year, well below the national average of 0.45.

The property that was threatened in 96 fires that Bismarck Fire Department responded to in 2013 had a total value of over $110 million. The total loss for the year was $1.9 million, which was significantly higher than recent years. Over half of that property damage was attributed to two fires in May. Those were the Manhattan Building and the Norma Apartment Building. These had an estimated loss of $700,000 and $375,000, respectively.

The average fire loss for Bismarck over the last five years is 1.12 million, which is less than 60% of the nationwide average for cities with populations from 50,000 to 100,000.

The goal of the department is to respond to alarms from the time of dispatch to on scene time in less than 6 minutes 90% of the time. This includes 1.5 minutes for firefighters to get ready and 4.5 minutes to travel to the scene. The department reached the 6 minute mark 89.99% of the time in 2013. The average response time was 4 minutes 29 seconds for fire calls and 4 minutes 7 seconds for emergency medical calls.

Fires

Private Dwellings	25
Apartments	14
Other Residential	5
Total Residential	**44**
Other Structure Fires	14
Vehicle Fires	25
Grass/Wildland	2
Other Fires	11
Total Non-Residential	**52**
TOTAL FIRES	**96**

Other Incidents

EMS	2050
False Alarms	566
Mutual Aid	4
Hazardous Materials	67
Other Incidents	323
Total Other Incidents	**3010**
TOTAL INCIDENTS	**3106**

Incidents per Station Area

Headquarters	763
Expressway	887
Tyler Parkway	433
Sleepy Hollow	496
Lockport	527

Snapshot of Other Types of Department Activities in 2013

Fire Prevention Inspections

Annual Fire Inspections	2985
Daycare Inspections	120
Fire Alarm Acceptance	77
Sprinkler Acceptance	60

Environmental Health

Food Service Inspections	776
Swimming Pool Inspections	44
Weed Control Inspections	261
Frozen Dessert Inspections	58
Environmental Health Complaints	241
Tattoo/Body Art/Tanning	12
Lodging Inspections	30
Other (Air, Mosquito, Pets, etc.)	112

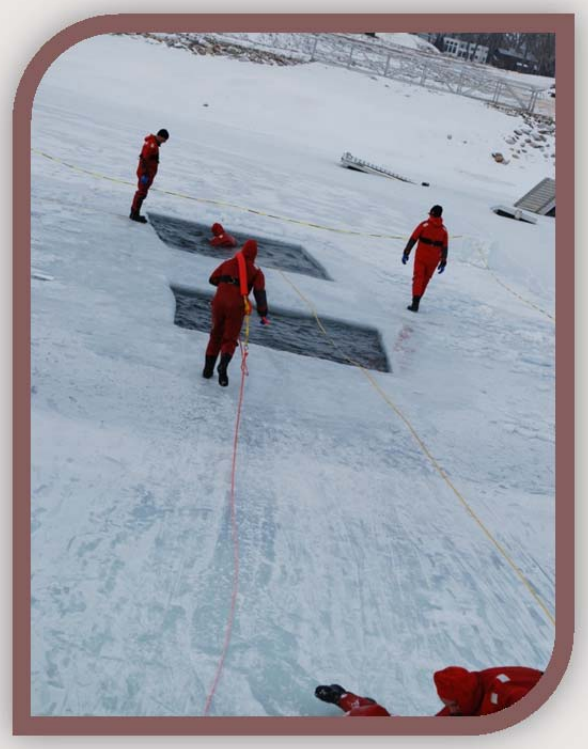
Public Education Events

Station Tours	55
Safety House	17
School Visits	25
Community Events	19
Extinguisher Training	10

Public fire education was delivered to over 10,000 persons through these events.

Firefighter Training

Fire Suppression Training Hours	15,211
Other Training (Hazmat, EMS, Rescue, etc.)	12,999
Total Training Hours	28,210
Average Training Hours per Firefighter	392



Personnel Changes

The employees of the Bismarck Fire Department are highly valued professionals. In 2013, two persons were promoted to the ranks of Fire Captain and Fire Battalion Chief. Five persons were hired as firefighters.

PROMOTIONS

Jeffrey Holte

Promoted from Captain to A Shift Battalion Chief on January 16, 2013. BC Holte has been a member of the BFD for 29 years and served as a company officer for 24 years before being promoted to Battalion Chief.

Jonathan Hildremyr

Promoted from Firefighter to Captain on February 2, 2013. Captain Hildremyr served as a member of the BFD for 8 years before being promoted to Captain.

NEW HIRES

Timothy Maloney

Hired as a Firefighter on February 16, 2013. FF Maloney was raised in Bismarck. He served with the Bismarck Rural Fire Department before joining the BFD.

Nicholas Reisenauer

Hired as a Firefighter on February 16, 2013. FF Reisenauer was raised in Bismarck. He served with Mandan and Minot City Fire Departments before joining the BFD.

James Huntington

Hired as a Firefighter on February 16, 2013. FF Huntington was raised in Bismarck. He served with Bismarck Rural and Bismarck Airport Fire Departments before joining the BFD.

Daniel Dalzell

Hired as a Firefighter on February 16, 2013. FF Dalzell was raised in Elk River, MN. He served on the Yarnell, AZ, Fire Department before joining the BFD.

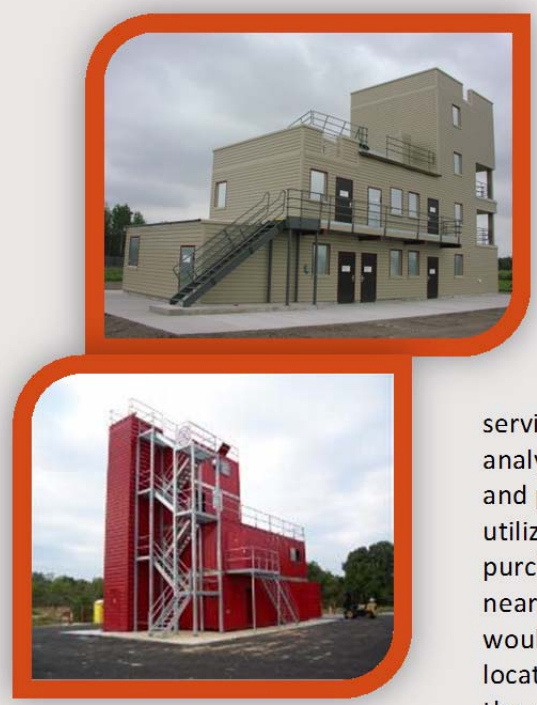
Duane Ell

Hired as a Firefighter on November 16, 2013. FF Ell was raised in Mandan. He served on the Mandan City Fire Department before joining the BFD.

Planning for a Future Burn Building and Fire Station

In 2013 the department made significant plans for the future. One long term need for the department has been a live fire training building. Firefighters need regular training in a live fire setting. This allows for practicing established fire suppression tactics and for trying new methods. Currently, training of this type is done with other cities' facilities. This limits the amount of time available for this important training and therefore only allows for occasional fundamental training.

This past year plans were initiated and approved by the City Commission to purchase land and construct a fire training building to meet the department's needs. The burn building will provide several different burn rooms to simulate fires on different levels in different types of buildings. This allows for training for search, rescue, fire suppression and ventilation in many different types of situations. The burn rooms will be specially built to withstand years of fires. The building will have places for rope rescue and confined space training and can be used for training in other specialty responses such as hazmat and structural collapse.



Examples of Fire Training Buildings

The site of the burn facility is being designed to address another need of the city, a future fire station. The department uses an ongoing process of assessing the changing risks and demands for service for the City of Bismarck. The department regularly analyzes Community Development data, incident records and planning reports to look for better opportunities to utilize available resources. The location of the land being purchased is expected to be in the NE section of the city near Bismarck Expressway and Revere Drive. This station would be staffed by moving Engine 4 from its current location at the Sleepy Hollow Station. Moving Engine 4 to the east will better distribute the department's resources to allow for better coverage to northeast and southeast Bismarck. There are two critical components associated with this project; 1) the East Divide Avenue construction which, when complete, will allow for better east-west emergency response travel in that area; and 2) the rapid growth in the NE part of the community. Relocating this station will delay adding the staffing for a sixth station and situate the station so two stations can cover an area that would have used three.